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12–13) about when the lad was helping with the housebuilding and even scold him if he bungled a task. This was legitimate technical instruction. But he declared emphatically that he dare not strike the boy, *on ndɔyam la zugu*. From the authority of parent over child is derived that of elder sibling over younger. It is equally absolute. A youth or girl has no hesitation in restraining or correcting a younger sibling with a cuff which often sends the latter off howling at the top of his voice. The authority of seniors in general over juniors is accepted by custom (e.g., among herdboys), though not so absolutely and unquestioningly. It is often maintained by force, or in virtue of superior skill. It is intelligible, therefore, why the Tallensi usually say *ti banam yɛl nla*, 'our forefathers' matter is this' when they are asked to account for an observance, and why their children say, *bunkɔra la yɛl ti la gwala*, 'the grown-ups have told us so'.

Just as all Tallensi, children or adults, recognize the force of authority, even though they sometimes flout it, so they accept the principle of equal rights for equals. One can see this, not only in standardized patterns of behaviour, but, e.g., in the spontaneity with which children share things and activities. When a small boy snares a bird or kills a mouse or lizard he will always share his catch with friends or siblings, apportioning it according to sex and age. A favourite pastime of boys of all ages, from 5 upwards, is wrestling. Sometimes bigger youths stand by to supervise, but always scrupulous fairness is insisted upon, and thus instilled. It is as correct and even praiseworthy to demand what one is entitled to as it is reprehensible to take what one has no right to. A nice illustration, showing incidentally how such principles are sometimes taught, came to my notice during an evening ceremony which had been unduly dragged out. A dozen or more small boys aged from 5 upwards had gathered at the ceremony to wait for a share of the feast which would follow the religious rites. The food was sent out and distributed by an adult, one or two boys of equal size to a dish. Suddenly an elder called out, 'Where is Zuur?' (a small boy of about 5) and rose to look for him. Zuur lay fast asleep in a corner. The old man shook the child roughly to awaken him, and dragged him towards a dish of food upbraiding him, 'Where do you think you will find food after it has all been eaten? You can't control yourself at all.' Zuur, still

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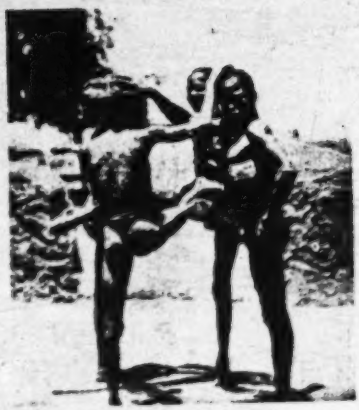

Recreational Play: *Kwabon* (posed)

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A wrestling match—with an eye on the goat lest it wander into the growing crops

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524 scaring birds on the home farm. They sat astride the trailing branch
867 of a baobab tree on the boundary of Gəmna's father's farm and Zoo's
868 father's farm. They slid down to talk to me, and a bigger lad, Təŋ,
857 aged about 10, joined us. Gəmna had wandered off a few yards and now came running up with three locusts. He called to his sister and Zoo. Eagerly they squatted round the locusts. 'These are our cows,' said Gəmna, 'let's build a yard for them.' Zoo and the little girl foraged around and produced a few pieces of decayed bark. The children, Gəmna dominant, giving orders and keeping up a running commentary, set about building a 'cattle-yard' of the pieces of bark. Təŋ, the older boy, also squatted down to help. He and Gəmna constructed an irregular rectangle with one side open of the pieces of bark. Zoo fetched some more pieces of bark which Təŋ used to roof the yard. The little girl stood looking on. Gəmna carefully pushed the locusts in, one by one, and declared, 'We must make a gateway.' Rummaging about, the boys found two pebbles which they set up as gate-posts, with much argument as to how they ought to stand. Suddenly the whole structure collapsed and Təŋ started putting it up again. The little girl meanwhile had found a pair of stones and a potsherd and was on her knees, 'grinding grain'. Suddenly the two small boys dashed off into the growing grain, shouting to scare the birds. In a minute or two they returned to squat by the collapsed 'cattle-yard'. They appeared to have forgotten all about the 'cows', for they were engrossed in a conversation about 'wrestling'. Some one called Təŋ, who departed. Zəŋ, finishing her 'grinding', came up to the boys with the 'flour' on a potsherd and said, 'Let's sacrifice to our shrine.' Gəmna said indifferently, 'Let Zoo do it.' Zoo declared that Gəmna was senior to him, and an argument ensued as to who was senior. Eventually Gəmna asserted, 'I'm the senior.' Zəŋ meanwhile had put down her 'flour' which
●[526] was quite forgotten; for Zoo challenged Gəmna's assertion. Gəmna retorted that he was undoubtedly senior since he could throw Zoo in wrestling. Zoo denied this, and in a few minutes they were grappling each other. Gəmna managed to throw Zoo and rolled over him; but they stood up in perfectly good temper, panting and proud. Suddenly with a shout Gəmna began to scramble up the baobab branch, followed by Zoo, calling out, 'Let's swing.' For a minute or two

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in sacrifices to domestic shrines; the girls assist in household tasks such as sweeping and carrying water. Towards the end of this period boys whose fathers own cattle go out with the cattle-herds and girls are beginning to help in the preparation of food. A 10-year-old girl can prepare the majority of usual dishes. At the age of 6 or 7 brothers and sisters often play together; at 9 or 10 the sexual dichotomy has become firmly established.[1]

At this stage the play of infancy develops in three directions. The sporadic motor exuberance is transformed into recreational play—organized group games and dances; the rudimentary mimetic play becomes elaborate and protracted imaginative and constructive play; and the rude toy-making of infancy grows into children's arts and crafts.

Tale children have a great many organized games, passed on from one generation of children to the next by drawing younger ones into the games played by those who already know them. The games are traditional, and often built round themes derived from the cultural idiom—farming, hunting, marriage, chiefs, &c. But their value is predominantly recreational. Children play them for the pleasure of collective singing, rhythmical physical activity, and sensory and bodily stimulation. The ordinary dances of moonlight nights in which both adults and children participate are regarded as 'play' of this kind.

Kwobon is a game of this sort. Both boys and girls from 7–8 to about 15 years play it on moonlight nights in single-sex groups. A group of about the same size forms a ring, clasping each other and standing on one leg. The other leg is extended towards the centre of the ring, and the children arrange themselves so that their extended legs cross one another. The group then commences to revolve, singing as they go round and round, *kwobon, yee-e-e la yaah*, 'fruits of farming, yee, how nice'. The game goes on until they are tired and the extended legs begin to drop. It breaks up with much laughter, only to start again after a rest. Similar games are played by boys only and others by girls only; but for both sexes dancing is the supreme recreation. In both the mixed dances and the single-sex

[1] Nevertheless, this sexual dichotomy is not so absolute as to prohibit a girl or a woman from stepping into a breach if there is no male available for a man's task; and men often undertake women's work in an emergency.

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857 dances one invariably sees a few small boys or girls at the tail end of the
535 line. At the beginning of the Festival season one often meets a group of children about 6–9 years old practising the dances in their play, crudely but recognizably.

857 At this stage, and till pubescence, boys spend a great deal of their
868 leisure improving their dexterity with the bow and arrow. They now
224 have bows like a man's but smaller, and real arrows with unbarbed
● 526 heads. They go about in small groups practising marksmanship—shooting at a guinea corn-stalk or a chunk of wood. Sometimes they challenge one another and shoot according to certain rules. The loser forfeits an arrow to the winner. All this is recreational play; but it has a very practical aspect, recognized by adults and children. In Taleland the bow is the symbol of manhood; and every man must know how to wield it. The long years of practice necessary to become an accomplished shot begin with the small boy's first toy bow and extend through the play of childhood and pubescence. Part of this play-practice is the hunting of small field animals and birds. To the boy it is a real hunt, demanding knowledge and alertness and yielding a favourite titbit. Yet it is play as well, being neither obligatory nor dangerous, and being mimetically derived from an adult activity. This has great educational importance. The boy in his play identifies himself with the men, accepts their practical valuation of the bow and arrow, and tries out, as it were, what it feels like to be a man in this respect. Boys often hunt thus in groups, especially when they are out herding cattle, and share the spoil, thus training themselves in co-operation and fair dealing. By the age of 11–12 boys begin to accompany their fathers or elder brothers to real hunts, though they remain onlookers for the most part, whose principal task is to help carrying home anything killed. Not till adolescence will they be allowed to use barbed and poisoned arrows; but quasi-playful hunting thus shades over into the real activity for which it is a preparation.

857 Imaginative play is rich and frequent during this period, though its
153 themes appear to be few. Family life, the principal economic activities, and domestic ritual supply the mimetic content. Sometimes children are entirely preoccupied with such play for hours at a time; often it is interwoven with practical activities or appears as a resonance of practical activities in which the children co-operate.

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The corresponding play of boys at this stage is 'cattle-keeping'. It occurs more sporadically than the girls' play, particularly with older boys; but as much fantasy and invention go into it. Sometimes, indeed, it seems like an overt day-dream of leisure hours. One boy alone, or two, usually play. When the group is bigger more boisterous or recreational play ousts it—they wrestle, shoot arrows, gamble with ground-nuts, or at certain seasons pitch bangles and hoops of plaited reed. Boys of all ages are far less placid than girls.

The 'cattle' play involves constructing a 'house' in which the 'gateway' and the 'stable' are prominently indicated and finding something to serve as 'cattle'—sheep and goats never seem to enter. These activities, and moving the cattle about in and out of the 'stable', with murmured remarks in monologue or addressed to a companion, constitutes the play. I have never been able to record this accompanying speech as I have always had to watch cattle play from a distance. Boys say that it is 'about bulls and cows'.

'Cattle' play has more of pure fantasy and less reproduction of real activities than 'housekeeping' play. Sometimes the 'house' and 'stable' are built of mud—a circular 'wall', 9 or 10 inches in diameter and 2 inches high, with a space left for the 'gateway', and a smaller circle of mud adjoining it as the 'stable'—to last for a whole dry season. Often it is constructed *ad hoc*—two circles drawn in the sand or made of heaped-up sand may be enough. A great variety of objects serve as 'cattle'. Boys who like modelling may make clay figures of cows and bulls for their play; bits of sticks, leaves of a common shrub which can be opened so as to stand up on their edges, pebbles, and other things are used. Yet despite the meagre materials and the paucity of mimetic content the play fascinates boys from the age of 5 or 6, when they are still too young to go out with the herds, to about 12, when they may be full-blown herd-boys. Even if their families have no cattle and they have never followed a herd regularly, they play at it. The interest and identification are active nevertheless.

At this stage, too, domestic ritual begins to be reflected in the play of boys. A boy's or girl's schema of ritual and religious ideology at the age of 9 or 10 includes the main structural principles of the system. As his knowledge has been acquired by attending at sacrifices, he knows most about the ritual acts and conventional formulas connected